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## Today in National Affairs

# Fulbright Report on U-2 Seen Reaching 'New Low'

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WASHINGTON, June 29.—Has the "prestige" of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee "reached a new low"? The Senate has just been given a report on the U-2 affair which in past years concurred in by some of its members, while others dissent. It lacks co-ordination and consistency. Ten Senators—all of them Democrats, including Sen. Kennedy—officially put themselves on record as implying that the President should have lied to the world. Six Republicans and one Democrat insist that it was absolutely necessary for the President to tell the truth.



Lawrence

The same committee's chairman, Sen. J. William Fulbright, D., of Ark., after presenting the report to the Senate, alleges that the Administration is lying now about certain aspects of the incident. In a speech to the Senate, he says:

"We are told that this particular flight was in a special category; that it was seeking information of extraordinary importance which might not be available later. However, we are not told, even under conditions of the utmost secrecy, what that information was. In view of the sensitivity of some of the other things we were told, this reticence on the part of the executive branch raises the question of whether the information sought on May 1 was in fact as important as it has been represented. There is ground here for the conclusion that the alleged extraordinary importance of this information is the Administration's cover story for its own costly mistake."

### Sees Inconsistency

To accuse one's own government of lying to a Senate committee doesn't seem to bother the Senator, who, in the same speech, also declares that President Eisenhower should have refused to take responsibility for the U-2 business and, instead, should somehow have evaded the truth. For, while Mr. Eisenhower did not really know in advance of the particular flight on May 1, he did give general authorization in advance and said so to the American people and the world. Yet Chairman Fulbright says to the Senate:

"The gravest mistake was made when the President assumed responsibility for the flight."

Sen. Alexander Wiley, of Wis., ranking Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, and Sen. Frank Lausche, of Ohio, D., in a separate report, concurred in by five Republican Senators, rebutted this same point as follows:

"Conditions following the May 1 flight having developed as they did, it was unavoidable for the President to make a statement with regard to it. If he had to make a statement, he had to state the truth. Moreover, if he had not told the truth by avoiding personal responsibility, the four demands Khrushchev made upon him in Paris would not have been altered."

### Notes Contradictions

But what is puzzling are the contradictions in the main report, which frankly says that "the sort of information provided by the U-2 is of enormous value in assessing Soviet capability to mount a surprise attack," and then argues later on as follows:

"In looking back, if one accepts the conclusion that the failure of the mission furnished an excuse for Khrushchev's wrecking of the 'summit' conference, then, in the absence of compelling reasons to the contrary, there is good reason to conclude that the flight should not have gone."

But the Secretary of Defense says the reasons were compelling, and the Senate majority report itself concedes the great value of information obtained by the U-2 flights, which were needed to help protect the American people against surprise attack by the missiles of the Soviet Union.

### The Fulbright Speech

Possibly the prime example of inconsistency and lack of co-ordination among the Democratic members is to be found in Sen. Fulbright's own speech, when he says:

"In any event, my argument is not that the President should not have told the truth; my argument is that he should not, as the head of our nation, have become personally involved in the incident, one way or the other."

### Wouldn't Satisfy Red Chief

This appears to be one of those "distinctions without a difference." For the query will be immediately posed as to how a President of the United States can keep himself from becoming "personally involved" in any official action taken by his own Administration. One can hear already the outcries from the Democrats demanding an investigation of why the President, assuming that he did blame some one else, didn't know in advance what was being done and why he has subordinates who do such things, and so on. Indeed, Mr. Khrushchev would not have been satisfied with such a "patent" evasion of official responsibility and would have continued to demand the removal and punishment of those same subordinates.

There was a time when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee had considerable prestige. Today its report stands as a glaring example of how to furnish arguments to the Soviets for use on the air waves to try to discredit the United States and to help bring it to a "new low in prestige"—which phrase an American Senator, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, uses in an indictment of his own government.

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